



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 1.31

Subject:	Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Letter of Support (LOS), and Survey Proposal and Approval Process
Authority:	TCA 37-1-612, 37-5-105 (3), 37-5-106, 37-5-107, 37-5-115, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)
Standards:	COA: PA ETH 6.01, 6.02, 6.03
Application:	All persons requesting Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Letters of Support (LOS) within the scope of the Department; and all persons requesting to survey DCS employees, clients, and/or stakeholders.
Policy Statement:	
The Department of Children's Services (DCS) supports and cooperatively engages in Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Support (LOS) proposals and surveys that contribute to public policy, best practice and improved service delivery. DCS adheres to all State and Federal Rules and Laws that protect the confidentiality of clients and client records when providing support for requests for information including data and survey results.	
Purpose:	
To provide guidance on how to submit proposals for approval.	
Procedures:	
A. Scope	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. No proposed MOU, LOS, or survey will interfere with a DCS employee carrying out his/her normal and customary assigned duties, nor will any proposed project conflict with applicable State and Federal Rules and Laws or applicable accreditation standards regarding use of human subjects.2. Proposed and/or approved MOU, LOS, or surveys will not interfere with DCS or a contracted agency conducting necessary program evaluation studies of existing or proposed programs provided the study does not conflict with applicable State and Federal Rules and Laws or applicable accreditation standards regarding use of human subjects for surveys, MOU, and LOS proposal purposes. Instead, this policy provides guidance and oversight to ensure program evaluation occurs at a quality level.3. Proposed and/or approved MOU, LOS, or surveys will not interfere with DCS instituting pilot programs used to determine how proposed operational changes impact public safety or departmental operations.4. A list of all proposal requests for MOU, LOS, and surveys is maintained by the Office of Continuous Quality Improvement (OCQI) Policy Development Unit

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	<p>(PDU).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Any employee or client asked to voluntarily participate in a project or survey is free to participate or decline. Refusing to participate in any project or survey will not affect any benefits to which employees, clients or participants are otherwise entitled, and no one is ever required to participate in a study.
B. MOU and LOS approval process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> DCS employees asked to enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Agreement or sign a Letter of Support (LOS) from an external entity must submit a copy of the draft document to the Office of Continuous Quality Improvement (OCQI) Policy Development Unit (PDU) at EI DCSMou LOS and Survey@tn.go to begin the approval process. A signed confidentiality agreement form may also be required. OCQI PDU forwards the document to DCS Legal who approves, makes changes to, or denies the draft MOU/LOS section for DCS for consistency across MOU/LOS and to ensure the agency has the capacity to fulfill the terms of the agreement/support. If the MOU/LOS is approved by legal, OCQI PDU facilitates the submitting employee's completion of the MOU/LOS synopsis form (CS-4186, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Synopsis or CS-4191, Letter of Support (LOS) Synopsis), attaches it to the MOU/LOS, and sends it to the Commissioner for final signature. If the Commissioner approves the MOU/LOS, OCQI PDU sends the signed MOU/LOS to the DCS employee, stores a copy on the shared drive and lists it on the tracking spreadsheet. If the Commissioner does not approve the MOU/LOS, OCQI PDU communicates that to the submitting employee, stores a copy on the shared drive and lists it on the tracking spreadsheet. This ensures all MOU and LOS are stored in a centralized location and easily tracked for future reference.
C. Surveys	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> DCS employees and/or external entities wanting to distribute a survey to DCS employees, children, or families must submit the survey to the Office of Continuous Quality Improvement (OCQI) Policy Development Unit (PDU) at EI DCSMou LOS and Survey@tn.gov. The OCQI PDU forwards the document to DCS Legal who approves, makes changes to, or denies the survey. If the survey is approved by legal, the OCQI PDU facilitates the submitting employee's/external entity's completion of the survey synopsis form (CS-4196 Survey Synopsis), attaches it to the survey, and sends it to the Commissioner for final signature. If the Commissioner approves the survey, OCQI PDU sends the signed survey to the DCS employee/external entity, stores a copy on the shared drive and lists it on the tracking spreadsheet. If the Commissioner does not approve the survey, OCQI PDU communicates that to the submitting employee, stores a copy on the shared drive, and lists it on the tracking spreadsheet. This ensures

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	<p>all surveys are stored in a centralized location and easily tracked for future reference.</p> <p>5. The OCQI references the survey schedule to ensure there are no other surveys open or scheduled to be sent out during the same time. If there are conflicts with the schedule, the OCQI provides dates and lengths of time that work and tracks them on the survey schedule. A copy of the survey is stored in the survey folder on the shared drive. This is to ensure all surveys are stored and tracked in a centralized location.</p> <p>6. The employee/external entity sends the survey results to OCQI PDU to be stored in the survey folder and tracking.</p>
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Forms:	<p><u>CS-4186, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Synopsis</u></p> <p><u>CS-4191, Letter of Support (LOS) Synopsis</u></p> <p><u>CS-4196, Survey Synopsis</u></p>
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Collateral documents:	<p><u>Department of Health and Human Services - Protection of Human Subjects - Title 45 Part 46</u></p>
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Glossary:	
Term	Definition
	None